

**Written Statement of the Honorable Allen Boyd  
Before the  
House Transportation Subcommittee on Water Resources and the  
Environment**

**March 11, 2008**

Chairwoman Johnson, Ranking Member Boozman, and members of the subcommittee.

Thank you for convening this hearing on this most important topic, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify today.

For almost 20 years, the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint water sharing disagreements have presented numerous challenges on the local, state, and federal levels. In order for us to successfully and responsibly address this issue, we must look at the big picture and tackle both our short-term and long-term problems.

My testimony before the subcommittee will focus on the need for the states to plan for their own water needs, which Georgia has not done.

I have been fighting for the Apalachicola River Basin along the Florida coast for all of my 19 years in public service.

I have worked closely with the Water Management Districts in Florida, especially as they began to focus on regional water supply needs in the late 1970s, when water supply constraints in the western Panhandle became quite evident.

Because Florida chose to focus on water issues three decades ago, Water Management Districts in Florida were created by a state constitutional amendment and then were given broad statutory authority by the state legislature.

Water Management Districts were given ad valorem taxing authority as well as their statutory authority, which include programs such as:

- Land acquisition
- Regulation
- Construction
- Land management
- and Water resources preservation

These efforts continued through the 1980s.

The first Regional Water Supply Development Plan was completed in 1982.

And embody these agreements in a durable, tri-state compact with strong enforcement mechanisms.

Also, fundamental inequities that currently exist between the states need to be corrected. For example, growth management in Florida requires those seeking building permits be able to demonstrate that sustainable fresh water already exists to support that new usage. Georgia does not require this as part of the new development process.

The recent ruling in the D.C. Court of Appeals that overturned an award of 750 million gallons per day for Atlanta needs to find immediate implementation in actions by the Corp of Engineers to modify the current Exceptional Drought Operations plan and release the increased amount of water downstream.

If Georgia seeks to get Municipal and Industrial Water Supply added as a Congressionally Authorized Use for the waters in Lake Lanier, then there should be another Congressionally Authorized Use added for the protection and preservation of the health, ecology, and productivity of the Apalachicola River, Flood Plain, and Estuary.

I also believe firmly that Congress should have close oversight over the Corps of Engineers' development of an updated Water Control Plan for the ACF system, including a comprehensive scope for the Environmental Impact Assessment.

The current Exceptional Drought Operation plan should be expanded to include consideration of alternative water supply sources for the Greater Atlanta Area other than the Chattahoochee.

Madam Chairwoman, I am very excited to have members of the Apalachicola River Riparian County Stakeholders Coalition in Washington, D.C., for this important hearing.

Kevin Begos, the Executive Director of the Franklin County Oyster and Seafood Task Force, and a member of the Apalachicola River Riparian County Stakeholders Coalition, will testify before the subcommittee.

Kevin is on the front lines of the water sharing issue, and I am confident that he will be a strong voice to speak for our interests before the subcommittee.

Kevin will be joined at the hearing by other members of the Riparian Coalition: Dave McLain of the Apalachicola Riverkeepers; Smokey Parrish with the Franklin County Commission; and Chad Taylor representing Jackson County on the Riparian Coalition.

Their combined expertise and insight on this issue will be invaluable.

Thank you again for holding this hearing and for inviting me to testify.

I stand ready to help you and the subcommittee in any way I can.